Title: Requests the Central Government to take steps to procure rubber and need to check the prices of rubber and coconut.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (MUVATTUPUZHA): Sir, the economy of the State of Kerala has been shattered due to serious drop in prices of some of the agricultural crops, mainly rubber and coconut. As far as rubber is concerned, on the first day of the last session, when there was a dharna by about 45 MPs of different parties, the hon. Prime Minister had assured that some serious steps are being taken. He had also ordered and the Commerce Minister had also stated that 20,000 tonnes of rubber would be procured by the Government. The Government actually started it, but it has completely failed. Some serious steps have to be taken to see that 20,000 tonnes or much more quantity of rubber is procured because the way in which the implementation is being done is not proper. Therefore, the Government has to monitor and take immediate steps.

Sir, regarding coconut also, the issue is very serious. The price of rubber has crashed. Its price was Rs. 70 when the Congress Government was in power, but it has come down to Rs. 29 and it is further crashing not because any particular party is ruling. But I would like to say that within these four or five years, the prices have crashed to this extent. Therefore, about eight lakhs to ten lakhs of small and marginal farmers were particularly affected. So, I would suggest and urge upon the Government of India to take immediate steps in this matter.